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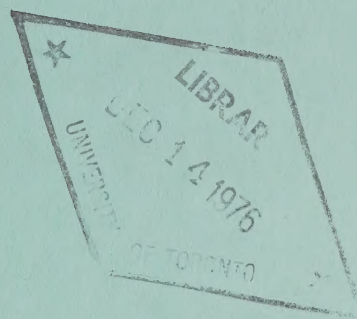
Government
Publications

ONTARIO COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

OPEN MEETING WITH YORK UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER 20, 1974

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ONTARIO COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

MINUTES

4-0158 MEETING

OPEN MEETING WITH YORK UNIVERSITY

LOCATION

Queen's Park
Toronto

DATE AND TIME

December 20, 1974
9:00 a.m.

4-0159 ATTENDANCE

OCUA MEMBERS

J. S. Dupré

W. E. Bagnall

J. J. Deutsch

A. D'Iorio

P. D. Fleck

J. D. Fisher

R. Gerstein

T. Giesbrecht

L. Good

W. A. Goyan

D. G. Hill

T. R. Léger

A. L. McCallion

J. F. Mustard

R. P. Riggan

Ronald S. Ritchie

H. H. Walker

J. R. Yarnell

OCUA STAFF

J. P. Venton
Executive Secretary

N. E. Simmons
Associate Secretary

MCU (Observer)

B. A. Wilson
Assistant Deputy Minister

COU (Observers)

B. L. Hansen
Research Director

C. Isacss

YORK DELEGATION

H. I. Macdonald
President

W. W. Small
Vice President

W. Dimma
Dean of Administrative Studies

R. Overing
Dean of Education

G. Reed
Dean of Graduate Studies

D. Maxwell
Master, Winter's College

G. Carrothers
Dean of Environmental Studies

J. Becker
Assistant Vice President

B. Bixley
Glendon College

M. Scott
Special Assistant to the President

W. D. Farr
Vice-President

S. Eisen
Dean of Arts

W. McClure
Principal, Lakeshore
Teachers' College

R. Lundell
Dean of Science

J. Greene
Dean of Fine Arts

T. O'Connell
Director of Libraries

N. J. Williams
Osgoode Hall Law School

H. Simmons
Chairman, York University
Staff Association

M. Knittel
Dean of Atkinson College

A. V. Tucker
Principal, Glendon College

In his introductory remarks the President stressed the need for qualitative enhancement of Ontario's university system and the disadvantages suffered by York under the current operating grants formula. In his opinion the announced level of funding for 1975-76 was indicative of a change in Government policy and the priority given to universities. He felt that it was critical that universities' attempts to cope with funding shortfalls in the short run not jeopardize the future of the system in terms of qualitative development and that youth should not suffer as a result of this public policy decision through enrolment limitations.

York had been attempting to adjust to a steady state in full-time intake. This situation caused little concern due to significant growth in part-time students. It was expected that intake limitations would have to be placed on departments such as Social Work due to the need for low student:faculty ratios and the University's inability to add to faculty complements.

The contrast between York's steady state intake and the significant growth possible at the University of Toronto was remarked upon briefly. The delegation felt that this reflected public preference for the University of Toronto and noted the difficulties which had been encountered by York in establishing itself so close to the other University. York was now proposing to attract students from the neighbouring community through such means as mounting ethnic programmes. While no breakdown was available on the ethnic background of students at York the delegation pointed out that there were large local Jewish and Italian communities. York's inaccessible location was also cited as a factor affecting enrolment, especially in light of the 15% intake increase at Glendon College, closer to downtown.

4-0162 CALIBRE OF ENTRANTS

The University had experienced growing variability in the skills of entrants. The Faculty of Science assessed all entrants to determine ability levels and in the Faculty of Arts a workshop designed to improve the writing skills of students had been in operation for 6 years. The delegation stressed that the latter, at a cost of \$77,000 per annum, was a significant, but unfunded, University activity. It was also pointed out that in a situation where class sizes were increasing, the ability to recognize students with writing deficiencies was becoming increasingly difficult.

York's "English as a second language" programme was also described. In the previous year approximately 300 students had taken the course and it was expected that if enrolment from the new Canadian population continued to grow, this type of programme would be in increasing demand.

4-0163 FACULTY

53% of York's faculty held tenure and 32% were on probationary appointments in the tenure stream. The delegation agreed to forward copies of the York tenure regulations.

The current FTE student:full-time staff ratio at York was 15.35:1. 18-19% of the full-time faculty were women and this proportion was reported to at least double among part-time faculty.

4-0164 OPERATING FINANCES

In the current financial situation York found it difficult to promote community usage of facilities due to the cost of maintenance. Although it could be argued that University facilities had been Government funded and therefore should be accessible to the community the delegation pointed out that universities had been encouraged to be businesslike and therefore could not be expected to carry the extra costs involved. York felt that the Government should understand that limitations on public accessibility to facilities

would further exacerbate the already bad public opinion of universities.

The delegation did not feel that York was servicing students adequately. Instructional costs were reported to be higher per student than at other similarly-sized universities, with administrative costs falling some \$100 below. 1975-76 was expected to mark the third or fourth time for some programme areas where increases in students would not be matched by increases in resources.

Support staff turnover had been a problem at York since the preceding summer and had now reached a rate of approximately 40%. Difficulties were also being encountered in recruiting support staff. An across-the-board \$500 salary adjustment for individuals earning up to \$12,000 was not considered to have fully rectified the differential between York's salaries and those offered for comparable jobs elsewhere in the local community.

The delegation urged that the people of the Province be informed that as a result of fiscal stringency the quality of university education would decline due to increasing class sizes, limited faculty-student intercourse, and testing only by examination.

With regard to ancillary operations it was noted that although these had suffered deficits in the past, York had adopted a break-even or profit objective for such services.

4-0165

CAPITAL FINANCING

The delegation stressed the need to know in advance the level of capital funding which could be expected in order that rational planning might be undertaken. Cyclic renewal was given priority over new building funds.

4-0166 DEFICIT FINANCING

The delegation discussed the desirability of a university deficit aid programme as a means of coping, in a sensible public policy manner, with the lowered priority and decreasing revenues of universities. This proposal assumed that universities would plan for and undertake long term adjustments and at the same time avoid the harmful short-term effects of fiscal stringency. Deficit aid would expand the adjustment period over a longer time base and reduce the social cost of immediate funding shortfalls.

York was reported to have balanced its budget in 1974-75 and the Board had stipulated that future budgeted deficits would only be approved where no alternatives existed.

4-0167 SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPORT

The York delegation recognized both student mix and undergraduate versus graduate orientation as criteria for supplementary support. As well, changes in the Law and Fine Arts formula weights were recommended.

The delegation expected that York would rely heavily on its 1975-76 supplementary grant and would therefore be directly affected by its adequacy. It was felt that the previous year's grant of \$250,000 had been inadequate.

4-0168 BILINGUALISM - GLENDON COLLEGE

The delegation discussed with Council the suggestion that bilingualism grants should be primarily related to courses or sections which are below a threshold enrolment. York proposed that there were particular costs associated with giving French as a second language which were over and above the "threshold size" concept.

4-0169 PLANNING

It was felt that if universities were to remain relevant to society, they must continue to expand knowledge. In a situation of fiscal stringency this could be accomplished through specialization. It was felt that an academic plan for each university and an overall plan for the Ontario system was required. York was reported to be in the process of developing such long-term plans. The delegation stressed the importance of avoiding ad hoc adjustments in reaction to imminent funding changes. York University did not feel that there should now or in the future be any limitation on student accessibility due to financial restrictions.

N. E. Simmons
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N. E. Simmons
Associate Secretary

J. S. Dupré
.....
J. S. Dupré
Chairman

